

**OVERVIEW:**

In an effort to better communicate and more clearly provide information, the Redevelopment Commission provides this report monthly to update those interested in recent activity. It summarizes each agenda item from the month; provides general project updates and items to be considered at future meetings; lists all open and upcoming RFPs; and provides accurate up-to-date demolition data and information on the Hardest Hit Fund Blight Elimination Program.

**CURRENT OPEN BIDS:**

All bid materials are available at [www.gary.in.us/redevelopment](http://www.gary.in.us/redevelopment)

Property for Sale: 15<sup>th</sup> Avenue and Colfax Street; Published on March 3, 2017; Responses due by March 15, 2017

**SUMMARY OF FEBRUARY 1, 2017 MEETING**

**Resolution No. 3747:** A resident, Sidney Givens, acquired 1328 Jackson Street and 1348 Jackson Street from the Redevelopment Commission.

**Resolution No. 3769:** A resolution authorizing and approving the 2017 Strategic Plan and Budget for MaiaCo LLC (Gary, IN). The Plan outlines \$2.5MM in expenses for 2017 to fund the Commission's property acquisition and planning projects. The Plan also lists roughly 400 properties excluded from Designated Project Areas. Report is available online at [www.gary.in.us/redevelopment](http://www.gary.in.us/redevelopment).

**Resolution No. 3770:** A resolution authorizing the execution of a professional services contract with Tanisha Simmons (Gary, IN) for board-up assistance. Ms. Simmons, a graduate of the city's Gary for Jobs program, will assist our board-up crew until spring when her landscaping company, Perfect Touch Lawncare, is active. Contract expires: 4/28/17; Do not exceed amount: \$5,500.

**Resolution No. 3771:** A resolution authorizing the execution of a professional services contract with RISE Consulting LLC (Gary, IN) for training and administrative oversight of Downtown Programming. A recent redevelopment employee, Denise Etchison, is no longer able to work full-time due to personal circumstances. Given her expertise in several programs and her oversight of the entire city's AmeriCorps VISTA program, we asked that she continue working on a part-time basis as a contractor to train her replacement and continue to lead some of the projects for which she is responsible. Contract expires 2/1/19; Do not exceed amount: \$30,000 annually.

**Resolution No. 3772:** A resolution authorizing an easement for the Miller Garden Club (Gary, IN) to utilize a storage shed located on the site of the old Ralph's Wilco grocery store at 504-10 Huntington Street.

**Presentation:** Richard Leverett of AT&T discussed fiber optic infrastructure and how it can be utilized in Gary.

**Receive and Open:** Bids for 15<sup>th</sup> Avenue and Colfax Street; received three responses. However, due to a typographical error in the newspaper advertisement stating 74 (not 73) separate parcels constituted the land area, the property is being re-advertised. A copy of the bid package is available on the city properties tab at [www.gary.in.us/redevelopment](http://www.gary.in.us/redevelopment).

**SUMMARY OF FEBRUARY 15, 2017 MEETING**

**Resolution Nos. 3773 and 3774:** A resolution agreeing to a demolition agreement between the Gary Airport Authority and subsequent demolition contract award for the demolition of a building across the street from the main entrance of the Gary-Chicago International Airport. The Redevelopment Commission will oversee, and the Gary Airport Authority will pay for, demolition of 5700-10 Industrial Highway. Contract awarded to Gary Material Supply LLC (Gary, IN). Contract amount: \$22,000.

**Resolution No. 3775:** Authorizing the transfer of 1220 Allen Street to Holistic Human Development, Inc. (Gary, IN), a Gary-based non-profit who rehabs homes and provides workforce development opportunities.

**Resolution No. 3776:** A resolution authorizing an Easement Agreement with Precious Black for use of property located on her home block of 700 Pennsylvania Street for the use of a side yard.

**Resolution No. 3777:** A resolution authorizing an Easement Agreement with NIPSCO to complete work to replace aged underground electric lines and transformers located at 425-43 Adams Street.

**Acceptance and Approval:** A change order to the Indiana Department of Transportation for an additional \$23,069.44 following the close out of Buffington Harbor Road. At the end of each INDOT project, bills are reconciled concerning local match and state funds. Improvements, specifically to the Buffington Harbor Road on-ramp, exceeded state funding by \$23,069.44.

**Open and Receive Proposals for Legal Services:** In January, the Commission posted an RFP for legal assistance with processing tax deeds. Contracts will be awarded at a future Commission meeting. We received fourteen responses, as follows:

- Amber, Golding, and Hofstetter (Dyer, IN)
- Harris Law Firm (Crown Point, IN)
- Inga D. Shannon Law Office (Gary, IN)
- Douglas Kvachkoff (Crown Point, IN)
- Smith Law (Merrillville, IN)
- Smith Sersic (Munster, IN)
- The Walker Law Group (Gary, IN)
- Drake and Associates (Gary, IN)
- Burke, Costanza, and Carberry (Merrillville, IN)
- Gomich LLC (Merrillville, IN)
- Barbara Bowling Williams, Attorney at Law (Gary, IN)
- Law Offices of Sonya D. Scott Dix (Gary, IN)
- Andy Young (Wadsworth, IL)
- Angela Jones, Attorney at Law (Gary, IN)

**Open and Receive Bids:** RFQ 2017-3 for the demolition of 724-42 E 5<sup>th</sup> Avenue and 360 Van Buren Street. Low Bidder: C. Lee Construction Services (Gary, IN): \$35,930

**Request to Advertise:** Proposals for sound system repair and upgrades at Gary Railcats Ballpark.

#### **STATUS OF ONGOING PROJECTS AND UPCOMING ITEMS:**

The Planning and Redevelopment Department, in concert with the Commission, is currently in the beginning stages of a long-overdue **City Comprehensive Plan update**. Beginning in late February, the Commission will begin an 18-month planning and public participation engagement to better position our city through zoning reform, land use planning, and ordinance revisions. To date, progress has started with an interlocal stakeholder group exploring the use of best management practices, natural preservation, and stormwater control in a nascent **Green Infrastructure Plan**. More information will become available as meetings are scheduled and the planning process begins in earnest. To date, we've been able to speak with eight of the nine members of the City Council and attended a 1<sup>st</sup> district meeting focused on zoning. The following meetings have been confirmed to discuss the upcoming city planning process:

**March 16th 5:30pm, Roosevelt Pavilion:** 5<sup>th</sup> District Meeting with Councilwoman Linda Barnes-Caldwell

**March 20<sup>th</sup>, 6:00pm, Tolleston Park Pavilion:** 3<sup>rd</sup> District Meeting with Councilwoman Mary Brown

The Commission has consulted on and approved the **2017 MaiaCo Annual Plan** that outlines the use of funds for 2017, consistent with the mission of the Redevelopment Commission. The document provides information on progress to date, including the hiring of two Gary residents to staff MaiaCo, an opening of office space in downtown Gary, and an anticipated investment of \$2.85M in the next year. The majority of these funds will go toward two things: First, legal resources to reclaim vacant and abandoned property, particularly parcels that went unclaimed in the most recent Treasurer's tax sale. Second, technical assistance and resources for land use planning as we begin the participatory planning process described above. For more information or to contact MaiaCo directly, visit: [www.maiaco.com](http://www.maiaco.com).

In cooperation with the Office of the State Attorney General and the NWI Regional Development Authority, the Commission has created a matching **façade improvement grant program** for transit accessible properties located within ½ mile of stations, such as South Shore railroad stops at Clark Road, Gary Metro, and Miller. Once the GPTC Broadway express stations are established, the program will expand to a ½ mile radius of those stops as well. Applications and more information are available online at [www.gary.in.us/redevelopment](http://www.gary.in.us/redevelopment) and at the Redevelopment office at 504 Broadway beginning March 12.

The Commission, in conjunction with the City's Planning and Redevelopment Department, is overseeing the complete **Airport Road Reconstruction Project**. The Commission has recently reviewed RFP responses for construction engineers and made a recommendation to the Indiana Department of Transportation. The \$6M project will completely reconstruct Airport Road/Industrial Highway from just west of the airport entrance to Clark Road. The project is scheduled to begin in the Spring of 2017.

The Commission is identifying potential downtown sites in anticipation of an **Open Call for Public Art** expected in March. We are currently working with other city departments and local groups to identify potential downtown projects from murals to façade treatments, to sculptures. Anyone interested in assisting the Commission with the development of this RFQ, please contact the Redevelopment office at (219) 886-1531. In related news, the Knight Foundation recently announced three downtown Gary projects as finalists for the **Knight Cities Challenge Grant**: The preservation of United Methodist Church; a public outdoors space to complement **ArtHouse** and the ballpark on 5<sup>th</sup> Avenue; and, a potential wedding venue/events space on Broadway.

In December the Commission published a **Master Developer RFQ** asking interested parties to submit qualifications in commercial, residential, and mixed-use development. This RFQ was meant to garner consideration and interest from firms across the country who may want to participate in future projects, like the **University Park** project or **Miller Transit-Oriented Development** off Lake Street. The Commission received submissions from eight firms:

- Berkeley Calhoun (Hyattsville, MD)
- NHP Foundation (New York, NY)
- Arsh Group (Merrillville, IN)
- Habitat Company (Chicago, IL)
- Meridian Hospitality (Cleveland, OH)
- Brinshore (Northbrook, IL)
- Gary Rising Partners/East Lake Management (Chicago, IL)
- Turnstone Development (Chicago, IL)

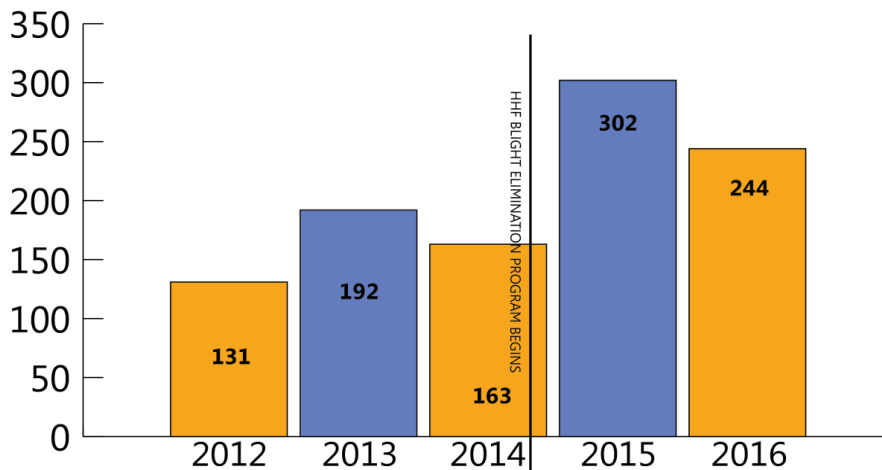
The Redevelopment staff is in the process of reviewing all submissions and following up with respondents to schedule interviews later this month. If you are interested in more information, please call the Redevelopment office.

The Commission piloted **housing deconstruction** on twelve homes in 2016 and 2017. Deconstruction, an alternative to traditional demolition, preserves salvageable components of abandoned homes from flooring to fixtures and re-uses them. Based on the success of the pilot initiative, the Knight Foundation awarded Gary a \$365,000 grant to establish a sustainable deconstruction program, in partnership with the Delta Institute (Chicago, IL). In late January, the **Steel City Salvage** project conducted job training on the 1200 block of Idaho Street. The training, offered free to Gary residents, was done in conjunction with the non-profit It's Gary's Time (Gary, IN). A deconstruction warehouse will open downtown by late spring and continued job training opportunities are expected throughout the year. For more information on deconstruction, visit [www.delta-institute.org](http://www.delta-institute.org) or call the office of the Redevelopment Commission.

The Redevelopment Commission is sponsoring the 2017 **Gary Preservation Tour**, through the hard work of our two AmeriCorps VISTA volunteers. We plan to host free tours of eight historic sites, on three separate days, over the summer of 2017. In addition to the tour, funds will go toward beautifying Broadway, cleaning and securing abandoned sites, and hosting public discussions that showcase our downtown through an historical lens. A matching crowdfunding grant program from the **Indiana Housing and Community Development Authority**, is currently active with the goal of receiving \$7,500 in funds to be matched by the state for this project.

For more information, or to donate, visit: [https://www.patronicity.com/project/gary\\_preservation\\_tour#/](https://www.patronicity.com/project/gary_preservation_tour#/)

## STRUCTURES DEMOLISHED BY YEAR



## DEMOLITION STATISTICS:

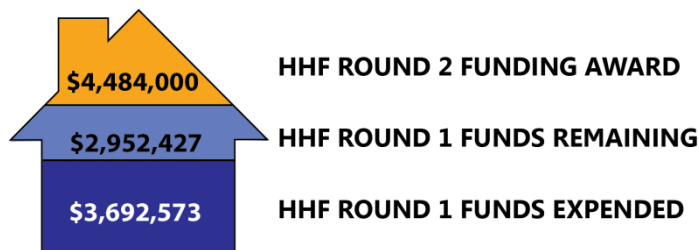
In an effort to improve public safety, project a more positive image for the City of Gary, and to promote investment, the Redevelopment Commission oversees an aggressive blight elimination program. A citywide survey completed in 2014 indicated as many as 12,000 blighted buildings stand in Gary; we are committed to mitigating the danger abandoned buildings pose to our residents and the image they project to businesses and visitors. Through in-house demolition, contracted demolition work, board-up, and

partnerships, we are making tremendous progress in improving the physical environment of Gary. To date, the majority of demolition is funded by federal programs, from HUD's Community Development Block Grant to the US Dept. of Treasury's Hardest Hit Fund **Blight Elimination Program**. The Redevelopment Commission also oversees in-house demolition done by city staff. In the past six months, the Commission has invested in a new payloader, a new excavator, and the rehabilitation of two trucks. We are also in the process of hiring two additional demolition positions. With the investment in better equipment and more staff capacity, in-house demolition will soon be able to operate two crews simultaneously.

Since 2012, the City of Gary – through the Redevelopment Commission – has demolished 1,032 structures. The majority of these projects were single-family homes, though several large commercial buildings were razed as well, most notably the Sheraton Hotel in 2014 and the Ambassador Apartments building in 2015.

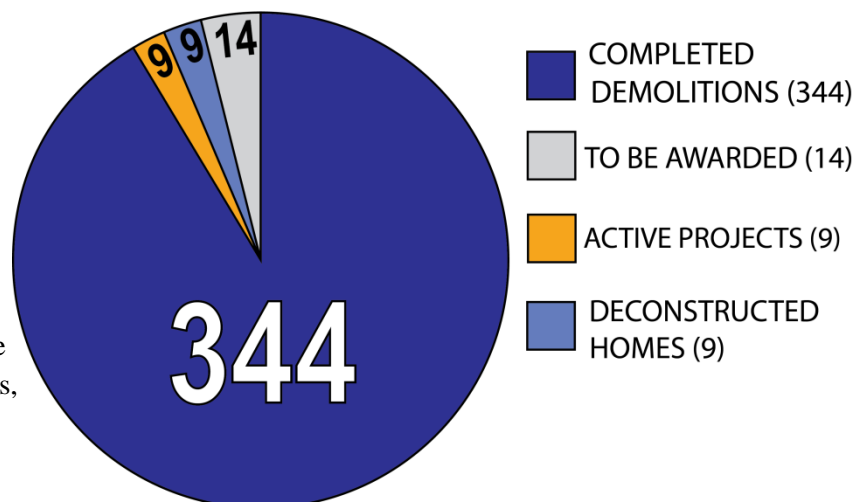
Through the HHF Blight Elimination Program, the City has demolished 344 homes to date and deconstructed 9 others. There is a single remaining bid package of fourteen properties, pending state approval. The average cost of demolition contracted the Redevelopment Commission is lower than the program's per-property allowance; as a result, the City will be able to use more than \$3,000,000 for additional Round I demolitions. In December, the Indiana Housing and Community Development Authority announced **Gary will receive an additional \$4,484,000 Round II funds** out of a statewide pool of \$5,500,000. Round II demolition is expected to begin by the summer of 2017. A complete accounting of all HHF Blight Elimination activity, including contract awards and workforce residency information, is available online at [www.gary.in.us/redevelopment](http://www.gary.in.us/redevelopment).

## HHF BLIGHT ELIMINATION FUNDING



Updated demolition information, including an interactive map, demolition queue lists for download, bid documents, and contractor information is available online at: [www.gary.in.us/redevelopment](http://www.gary.in.us/redevelopment)

## HHF BLIGHT ELIMINATION ROUND I PROGRESS



**ACTIVE 2017 CONTRACTS AWARDED BY THE COMMISSION:**

Legal Counsel: Gilbert King, Jr (Gary, IN), < \$40,000

Economic Development Consulting: Faegre BD (Chicago, IL), < \$65,000

Legal Services: Tolbert and Tolbert, LLC (Gary, IN), < \$40,000 on retainer

Data/Mapping: Amplify Labs (Detroit, MI), \$4,667

Environmental Testing: Metric Environmental (Indianapolis, IN), \$7,000

Board-Up: Simmie Fluker (Gary, IN), < \$10,000

Board-Up: Tanisha Simmons (Gary, IN), < \$5,500

Training/Programming: RISE Consulting, LLC (Gary, IN), < \$30,000

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*For any additional information regarding upcoming meetings, participation in projects, or redevelopment in general, please contact the office of the Gary Redevelopment Commission at (219) 886-1531.*

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**City of Gary Redevelopment Commission – 504 Broadway, Suite 200, Gary, Indiana 46402**